The Christian News-Letter

Edited by
J. H. OLDHAM

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DEAR MEMBER,

Two recent decisions of the Government are cheering evidence of constructive advance in war-time.

A Government white paper, containing a statement of policy on colonial development and welfare (Cmd. 6175), marks an entirely new departure in the application the principle of trusteeship to the Government of colonial peoples. Hitherto the perial Government has given financial assistance to the colonies only for schemes economic and material development, and it has been limited to a contribution wards the capital cost. The colonies, whether rich or poor, have had to bear the nning costs of such schemes and also the whole cost of their social services out of eir own resources. What they could do to promote the health and education of their ople was limited by what they could afford. Since the colonies live for the most part agriculture, and the rewards of agriculture under modern conditions are pitifully all, the social conditions of many of the colonies are deplorable. Public realization the state of things in the West Indies led recently to the appointment of a Royal mmission. The recommendations of this Commission (Cmd. 6174) have been blished along with the white paper on general policy.

The Government has now adopted the radically different policy of asking Parliaent to establish a Colonial Development Fund to promote economic, social and ucational progress and to endow it for ten years with grants sufficient to permit of expenditure up to five million pounds annually, and to make a further separate unt up to £500,000 a year for research.

A beginning is to be made at once in the West Indies, where an organisation will set up under a Comptroller equipped with an income of a million pounds a year m the British Exchequer to promote economic advance and social welfare. With Comptroller will be associated an Inspector General of Agriculture and a staff highly qualified technical officers in public health, education, housing, labour oblems and social welfare.

That this notable advance in the discharge of trusteeship should have taken place war-time is a great encouragement. Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, who has always had se interests at heart, is to be warmly congratulated on this bold measure.

The ground has been prepared for a policy of social advance by the fact that re has been at the Colonial Office for fifteen years an active Advisory Committee Education, served by a whole-time staff. This was set up, it may be worth recalling, Mr. Amery and Lord Harlech (Mr. Ormsby-Gore) on the initiative of the missionary ieties. Much progress has been made in the study of the education of less advanced ples; and, in particular, it has come to be realized that social progress must be

envisaged as a whole, requiring the co-ordinated effort of the administrative, agricultural, medical, educational and other technical services.

The occasion is not one for patting ourselves on the back and soothing ourselves with the thought that all is well with the British Empire. The task of implementing the decisions has still to be taken in hand. Money alone cannot achieve social betterment. It requires the sustained, creative activity of men and women. Everything will depend on the *content* of the new educational and social programme and on recruiting, both locally and at home, the right personnel to carry it into effect.

HELP TO REFUGEE ORGANISATIONS

The second welcome decision is the announcement in Parliament of assistance to the voluntary organisations caring for refugees from Germany and Austria. This includes a retrospective grant of £100,000 for the four months from the outbreak of the war to the end of last year, and a continuing grant from the beginning of the present year of one pound for every pound expended by the voluntary organisations up to a total of £27,000 a month. The position is to be reviewed in three or six months' time. It is essential to recognize that this does not remove the need for voluntary help; the grant is available only to the extent to which such help is forthcoming.

The number of refugees in this country, including children, who fled from Nazi persecution is between 70,000 and 80,000. It is estimated that since 1933 the voluntary organisations have spent £5,000,000 in aiding refugees, while in hospitality and other ways a further sum of £3,000,000 has been provided by private individuals.

It was felt by Jews in the earlier years of the refugee problem that Christian interest and effort in the refugee problem fell short of that of the Jewish community, as indeed it did. But the work of the Christian Council for Refugees in the past year and, in particular, its active co-operation with the Jewish Council in persuading the Government of the urgency of the problem in war-time has been greatly appreciated by the Jewish community. The *Jewish Chronicle* in a leading article refers to it as "assistance no Jew can ever forget."

The Christian Council for Refugees (Bloomsbury House, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.) is in urgent need of continued support.

LORD HALIFAX AT OXFORD

The situation created by the war is so vast and complex that it is difficult to grasp in its manifold and often contradictory meaning. Lord Halifax has laid us all under a debt by his extraordinarily profound and balanced interpretation in his address last week at Oxford. He stated with great clearness the difference between the moods of 1914 and of 1940, and between the outlook to-day of the older and younger generations, and went on to show that none the less the fundamental conflict is between youth and youth, and that this fact is the kernel of our future problems. He showed a deep awareness of the gravity of these problems and recognised that "there are things to-day within our body politic which we need to fight not less intensely, if with other weapons, than we fight the enemy without." The address has to be read as a whole to receive a true impression of its massive range and just proportions. I am glad that it has been reprinted as a pamphlet by *The Times* (price 1d.; 12 copies 6d).

A LETTER FROM GERMANY

There has come into my hands from an entirely trustworthy source a letter written by a man of standing in Germany. It shows that in Christian and other circles

in that country there is knowledge of the brutalities of the Nazi régime, and the same moral revolt against them as in the rest of the world. It is thus a reminder of the necessity of distinguishing between the German people and that régime.

The writer says that the real conflict is not between Germany and the Western Powers, but between European civilisation, which rests, in the last resort, on respect for the value and dignity of man derived from Christianity and the denial of these values. It is of the highest moment that the Pope has seen with such clearness what is at stake. The number of those in Germany who are becoming aware that these are the real issues is increasing, but they are constantly being driven back into the camp of Bolshevism by utterances from abroad which demand the complete destruction of Germany. The dictated peace of Versailles was a bitter injustice, and the countries that were responsible for it have all much to repent of, and have still further atonement to make.

The writer goes on to speak of what is happening in Poland:

"Not long ago I had an opportunity of hearing a report from an entirely authentic source. I cannot give you any indication of the source, since this would be too dangerous. My informant was asked for details about the transfer of the Polish population. He described the endless stream of people proceeding by day and night along the roads eastwards from Lodz, carrying with them the scantiest belongings. What this means in the inhuman cold one can imagine. There were daily shootings by the S.S., numbering eighty to a hundred victims daily. The S.S. were ordered to do this by the authorities. Robbery and plunder are called by the S.S. 'buying with a revolver.' A Russian officer engaged in the demarcation of the boundary declared that, great as was the misery he had seen in Russia, what he now saw exceeded anything that he had ever experienced. All this is absolutely authentic. I must confess that I was not able to sleep during the night on which I heard these things. The whole world must rise in revolt against them."

CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER BOOKS.

The first batch of Christian News-Letter Books was published last Monday by the Sheldon Press. The titles are:

1. The Resurrection of Christendom. J. H. Oldham.
2. Europe in Travail. J. Middleton Murry.
3. Education and Social Change. Fred Clarke.
4. The Message of the World-Wide Church. W. Paton.
5. Christianity and Justice. O. C. Quick.

The price of each volume is one shilling. The books should be ordered from a book-seller, not from the News-Letter office.

While the first volume in the series appears under my name and I am alone responsible for its present form, many of the collaborators in the NEWS-LETTER and others have co-operated in its preparation and made valuable contributions. The substance of the volume was approved in draft last summer by the Council on the Christian Faith and the Common Life. Like Mr. Eliot's book, *The Idea of a Christian Society,* it is intended to raise as a serious issue the question whether society is to be pagan or Christian. Can we be satisfied with anything else than a society so leavened with Christian ideas and values as to be entitled to be called a new Christendom?

Advance towards this goal requires the leadership of a body of people animated by common convictions. If people are to think together there must be some focussing

point. Since much common thinking has gone to the making of this small volume, it may perhaps serve, along with Mr. Eliot's volume, as a starting-point for the further thought of individuals or discussion groups. If those who study the two books will define where they agree or disagree, this will help us to know where we stand and assist in the growth of a common purpose.

TREASON AND THE ATONING DEED.

I have always thought that Josiah Royce, the American philosopher, who died during the last war, though he was far from being an orthodox Christian, had a penetrating insight into some of the key conceptions of Christianity. Take, for example, this passage from *The Problem of Christianity* (The Macmillan Company. Out of print), which has been much in my mind lately.

"The human community, depending, as it does, upon its loyal human lovers, and wounded to the heart by its traitors, utters its own doctrine of atonement as this postulate—the central postulate of its highest spirituality. This postulate I word thus: *No baseness or cruelty of treason so deep or so tragic shall enter our human world, but that loyal love shall be able in due time to oppose to just that deed of treason its fitting deed of atonement.* The deed of atonement shall be so wise and so rich in its efficacy, that the spiritual world, after the atoning deed, shall be better, richer, more triumphant amidst all its irrevocable tragedies, than it was before that traitor's deed was done."

The passage touches the very heart of Christianity. The words were written in 1913. Can we in the light of what has happened in the intervening years share Royce's faith in the "highest spirituality" of the *human* community? Is it possible to believe that to the dark, satanic forces which have broken through the crust of civilisation there can be opposed an atoning deed of such richness and efficacy that the world, as transformed by this creative deed will be better than if the treason which called it forth had never been committed? For myself, I can only say, "With men it is impossible, but not with God." Christianity asserts that there has appeared in history, not as speculation or ideal, but as actual fact, a love so strong and deep that it can vanquish even this evil; and that we may share—if we are willing to drink of Christ's cup—in its assured victory.

Yours sincerely,

J. H. Oldham

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RESISTANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION IN CHINA

By C. L. HSIA

People were used to being baffled by the upheavals and apparent chaos in China. Since the establishment of the National Government at Nanking in 1928, the authority of the Central Government extended year by year over that vast country, foundations of a universal system of education were laid, all kinds of constructive work—both economic and social—were begun, and a sense of national unity was growing. It seemed probable that Japan's invasion and her subsequent occupation of China's rich and progressive provinces would bring to an abrupt end China's manifold programme of reconstruction, and that the country would go back to chaos, ignorance and impotence. Contrary to all expectation, Japanese invasion has produced just the opposite effect; it has hastened the opening up and modernisation of China's vast hinterland; it has accelerated her political unification, economic development and social reconstruction.

INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION

The first result of the Japanese onslaught is the uprooting and dispossession of one hundred million people. They travelled along the railways and waterways; they thronged the highways; they rode in sedan-chairs, rickshaws, horse-driven carriages, on donkeys and mules. They moved from the Yangtze delta westward across the face of China. The refugees had among them many artisans and craftsmen. In the midst of the great trek also moved heroic people who worked not only to save themselves but to bring order, unity and knowledge to others. While this great westward trek brought to the back country of China immense and perplexing problems, it brought also the energy and intelligence to solve them. New roads and railways, arsenals, airports, factories and universities were being reconstructed—sometimes slowly and inefficiently, sometimes with amazing speed.

Following the Japanese destruction of the economic forces along the sea coast, it was the policy of the Chinese Government to establish a new order in the vast interior, wherein lies the nation's principal resources. The Chinese Government decided in the early days of the war to remove all factories located in or near war districts to the interior, so that China's productive vitality might be preserved. By November, 1938, 100,000 tons of machinery had been removed into the south-west areas, where a monster reconstruction programme is being carried out.

Since the coastal blockade, the Chinese Government has been endeavouring to keep the country linked up with the outside world by building and improving every possible means of transportation in the vast interior. Two great international highways —each of 3,000 miles long—one south-west to Burma and the other north-west to Russian Turkestan—were completed in an amazingly short time. The first war-time railway, from Hengyang to Kweilin, 200 miles in length, was completed in 394 days. It is but one of many examples of China's stamina and resourcefulness in face of tremendous difficulties.

To provide food and more food for a growing army and for the ever-increasing number of refugees is a pressing problem. To that end, revolving funds have been established in different parts of the South-Western Province, from which farmers may borrow. A number of public granaries have been set up in Szechuan, Kwangsi, Hunan and Kewichow. Homeless refugees have been transported to cultivate hitherto

sparsely populated and unexplored regions.

The gradual establishment of industrial co-operative societies throughout the country is part of China's economic defence. The movement forms a strong base for the country's war-time economy as well as for post-war reconstruction. Up till November 30, 1939, 1,200 co-operatives have been formed, giving employment to about 40,000 people. Work on a large variety of handicraft and small mechanical industries has already started at the different co-operatives. They include weaving, sewing, spinning, printing, leather-tanning, and the manufacturing of soap, candles, buttons, charcoal, tiles, and a hundred and one other things.

People used to say that the late Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was a dreamer. He dreamt of a time when China would be free and equal among nations; but he also dreamt of a time when within the Chinese democracy every person would be free and equal. This is the dream of countless millions in China to-day. The term "national reconstruction" connotes something more than a new industrial or economic order; it aims at the rebuilding of a new political, social and moral order as well. It has been reaffirmed time and again by our leaders that the two great tasks facing the Chinese people, reconstruction and resistance, are of equal importance.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Education always has an important place in China's programme of reconstruction. Just before the war started there were altogether 108 institutions of higher learning in China. Of these institutions, twenty-five have been forced to suspend their work altogether, fourteen have been completely razed to the ground, and thirty-seven have been compelled to move their premises to other places in the interior.

The education problem in this national emergency resolves itself into two aspects, that of relief and that of reconstruction. Relief measures comprise the transference of the universities and colleges from the war areas into the interior, where they will be able to continue their activities, and the appropriation of large sums of money for the relief of many teachers and students who have lost their sources of income.

The missionary schools and colleges have suffered with the rest. Cheeloo University has migrated from Tsinan in Shantung to Chengtu in Szechuan, a distance of over a thousand miles. Ginling, the premier women's college of China, has moved from Nanking to Chengtu. Lingnan University has migrated to Hongkong, and uses the lecture rooms, libraries and laboratories of the University of Hongkong. Hua Chung College moved from Wuchang 800 miles south to Kweilin in Kwangsi, and on being bombed out of that city moved another 800 miles to Kunming in Yunnan, and more recently has moved still farther west to Hsichow, on the borders of Burma. Mr. A. G. Castleton has stated the situation very moderately when he says: "In spite of more than two years of the most ruthless war the Far East has ever experienced, we can look back with pardonable pride upon the work that has been accomplished by our Christian Universities. We were undoubtedly helped by the wise attitude of the Chinese Government, which decreed that students must still continue their studies. The Government looked into the future, had a vision of large developments and reconstruction, and saw that it would need as many trained men and women as could be produced. To-day it is reaping the reward of its wise policy."

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Great social reconstruction is also taking place in China's rural areas. China's rural reconstruction forces, which in pre-war days were distributed in coastal regions, have since moved bag and baggage to the interior, where they are continuing with a new vigour. The programme in force follows three lines of approach: economic, political and cultural. They aim at improving the peasants' livelihood, strengthening their organisation, both for self-government and self-defence, and banishing illiteracy from 80 per cent. of China's population who live in rural areas.

In Szechuan nine different organisations are active in the field. One of the largest, the Szechuan Provincial College of Education, really a rural reconstruction institution, received financial aid from the Rockefeller Foundation to open a special research

department. It has a school near Chunking for intelligent youths from the farms. Other rural reconstruction projects in Szechuan include six experimental districts. Numerous villages have been set aside for experiments in rural work. A group of school teachers from the war zones form the second social education corps under the Ministry of Education.

The North China Council for Rural Reconstruction is now located in Kweichow. Its war-time social and economic service department has been entrusted with the training of various types of workers for hydraulic engineering, co-operatives, public health and agricultural promotion in the povince.

The Kiangsu Provincial College of Education used to have its headquarters in Wusih (near Shanghai). It is now in charge of the war-time mass education work in Kweilin (Kweichow) and continues its rural reconstruction programme. In other provinces like Hupeh, Hunan, Honan, Chekiang, Fukien, Shansi, Chahar, Hopei, Shensi, Kansu and Ninghsia, similar projects are in progress. In areas behind the Japanese lines such projects form part of the inhabitants' organised resistance against enemy penetration. As was to be expected, the awakening of national consciousness in the people and their organisation for self-defence are points of cardinal importance.

The war-time work of the Mass Education Movement Association has entered another significant stage with the inauguration of post-graduate courses in the projected National Institute of Rural Reconstruction. The Institute will consist of four main departments: Local government, rural education, agricultural economics and agriculture. If the need arises, two more departments (public health and animal husbandry) may be established. Character-building will be emphasised, since the students will later serve in various administrative capacities for furthering the programme of rural reconstruction in China.

What distinguishes the present rural reconstruction movement from its pre-war periods is the increasing co-operation and co-ordination between the groups in the field, and general agreement on all sides that their objective is a common one—to help solve China's rural problems as a sure way of solving the national problems as a whole.

In this rural reconstruction Chinese Christians have always interested themselves. The National Christian Council of China for many years has had a standing Committee on rural work. The Christian leaders in China have also begun to show a keen interest in the industrial co-operative movement. Many far-sighted Christians see the movement as a possible means of reconstructing China's future industrial life on a democratic and equitable basis. The Chinese industrial co-operatives indeed look forward to the time when the engineers and the co-operator together will bring to rural China something of the fuller and better life.

A Christian co-operative advisory committee has been lately appointed by the West China Branch of the National Christian Council of China, charged with the task of seeking for a spiritual revitalisation of the co-operative movement in China. Efforts will be made by Christians and Church groups to exercise their influence upon existing co-operative societies, especially through the leadership and example of individual Christians who are members of the societies, and to start experimentation in such non-economic fields as co-operative medical service, recreation and education.

THE CHINESE CHURCH

In face of this colossal task of national reconstruction, what part is the Chinese Church playing ?

In April, 1938, Madame Chiang Kai-shek said: "You know how missionaries have succoured the wounded and have helped our refugees, and have faced the bayonets, cannons and bombs . . . and have stood their ground. The Generalissimo and I feel that no words which we could speak could sufficiently express our debt of gratitude to the missionary body all over China, who have been a help to the distressed and the best of friends to the hundreds of thousands of refugees." As a token of China's appreciation of "the value of the real, vital contributions

that Christianity has made to the spiritual well-being and the livelihood of our people," Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek repealed in 1938 the law forbidding compulsory religious teaching in Christian schools in China.

The Chinese Church, including missionaries, is not only succouring the wounded and feeding the refugees, but also making valuable contributions to the work of nation reconstruction. In the reconstruction of national life Chinese Christians take a leading part, far out of proportion to their numbers.

In spite of the war, the work of the Y.M.C.A. has been forging ahead, expanding and reaching out to virgin fields throughout free China.

Most praiseworthy is the emergency service rendered by "Y" workers to Chinese soldiers in spite of difficulties in communications. This emergency service to soldiers, including work in hospitals for wounded soldiers, reception centres for troops in transit, clubs for officers and men off duty, recreational and educational programmes in camps and distribution of comforts, has been carried on for over two years. With the extension of war fronts, continuous expansion of our work has been made. At the present time 39 units with 312 full-time workers are functioning in twelve provinces.

The Christian Service Council for wounded soldiers in transit was formed in Hankow early in 1938. Seventy mobile service stations were soon established, which moved to wherever heavy fighting was raging. In 1939 there were a hundred and twenty stations behind the lines. More than seventy foreign missionaries in various parts of free China are rendering invaluable assistance to this work. These stations along the highways provide disabled men with drinking water, food, rest quarters, change of dressings, and some measure of medical care during their trip from the front to the base hospitals. Wounded soldiers in transit through the Shensi-Honan region are helped by the English and Canadian missionaries, while in the Hupeh region, English, Scottish, American and Norwegian all take part. In the Hunan-Kiangsi region, it is the American and English missionaries who are the most active, while in the Kwangtung area Americans, New Zealanders and Swedish missionaries share the general burden.

The duty of manning the work falls largely on the shoulders of the 500 Chinese members of the Council. Many of these men are former college professors, high school principals, writers, Government officials and church leaders, who abandoned their former positions to serve the wounded at a mere 20 dollars a month (6s. a week at the pre-war rate of exchange; it is more like 2s. a week at the prevailing rate of exchange). Probably for thousands of these soldiers and peasants this is the first time they come into direct contact with Christian influence.

It is the vision of a new and free China that has been inspiring and urging us to fight on and to carry on the work of national reconstruction. It is exactly a year ago that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek addressed the closing session of the People's Political Council in these words: "The Government hopes that at the end of the war our work of political tutelage will also be concluded. In other words, it hopes that the day of our final victory will coincide with the completion of the groundwork of our national reconstruction. . . . Whether democracy can be established in China depends entirely upon us. Whether our national regeneration can be brought about also depends upon us. . . . When I come to think of the trials and tribulations lying in front of us I cherish the greatest hopes in you who are sharing the same fate, like people in the same ship that has been caught in a storm. I wish that you will all strive hard to achieve victory for our war of resistance and success for our national reconstruction."

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